

Epistephium chironii, a new name for Ruiz & Pavón's *Sobralia amplexicaulis* (Orchidaceae)^a

Jessica Carpio-Lau¹, Miguel Mendoza-Tincopa² & Eduardo Antonio Molinari-Novoa³

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Abstract

A brief revision of *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón is given, based on the studies of the Madrid Herbarium types by Pupulin. Since *S. amplexicaulis* is considered different from Poeppig & Endlicher's *Epistephium amplexicaule*, a new name for the former is proposed.

Résumé

Epistephium chironii, un nouveau nom pour *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón (Orchidaceae) – Une brève révision de *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón, basée sur l'étude des types de l'herbier de Madrid menée par Pupulin, est proposée. Depuis lors *S. amplexicaulis* est considéré comme différent de *Epistephium amplexicaule* Poeppig & Endlicher : un nouveau nom pour le premier taxon est proposé.

Resumen

Epistephium chironii, un nuevo nombre para la *Sobralia amplexicaulis* de Ruiz y Pavón (Orchidaceae) – Una breve revisión de la especie *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón fue realizada, basada sobre los estudios de Pupulin con los tipos del herbario de Madrid. Ya que *S. amplexicaulis* es considerada distinta al *Epistephium amplexicaule* de Poeppig y Endlicher, un nuevo nombre para la primera es propuesto.

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Introduction

The genus *Epistephium* Kunth (1822) was created to accommodate a single Colombian, terrestrial species. After its original publication, the genus has expanded and currently comprises 21 recognised species. Systematically, it has been consistently considered to be a relative of the vanillas (Blume, 1835; Szlachetko, 1995; Chase *et al.*, 2015).

The application of the name *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón has been clearly understood until recently. Indeed, *S. amplexicaulis* has been historically regarded as a synonym of *Epistephium amplexicaule* Poeppig & Endlicher (1835) who equated (albeit with a “?”) their plant with that of Ruiz & Pavón (1798). The poor general description given in the Spaniards’ *Systema* can be applied to many species of *Epistephium* and therefore, this opinion was followed by later researchers dealing with the Peruvian and Andean flora (Schweinfurth, 1958; Brako & Zarucchi, 1993; Jørgensen *et al.*, 2014).

However, since the clarification by Pupulin (2012: 41), who provided a good account of the nomenclatural history of the Ruiz and Pavón’s species and a critical examination of the type and the icon associated to it, it has become evident, that *Sobralia amplexicaulis* belongs into the genus *Epistephium*, but is not conspecific with *E. amplexicaule* of Poeppig & Endlicher. As *E. amplexicaule* is a valid name, a new name for the entity of Ruiz and Pavón is needed.

Materials and methods

A revision of literature was made for the two species mentioned. When available, digitised herbarium sheets were analysed: *Vargas 4220* (CUZ, digital image! Two sheets), *Núñez 13328* (CUZ, digital image!), *Ríos 3581* (MO, digital image!). Nomenclatural changes were enacted in conformity to article 41 of the ICN (McNeill *et al.*, 2012). Oldest references were consulted upon the Biodiversity Heritage Library (www.biodiversitylibrary.org), while nomenclatural information was extracted from IPNI (<http://www.ipni.org>) and Tropicos (<http://www.tropicos.org>) databases (all retrieved 22/10/2015). The systematic position of the genus follows Chase *et al.* (2015).



Fig. 1: *Epistephium chironii* (= *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón)
 ABJ, Div. IV, 1306, drawing by I. Galvez. "Archivo del Real Jardín Botánico, CSIS, Madrid"
 © RJB-CSIC



Fig. 2: *Epistephium chironii* (= *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón)

MA 810759, TYPE. "Herbario del Real Jardín Botánico, CSIS, Madrid". © RJB-CSIC

Results

Subfamily Vanilloideae Szlachetko (1995)

Tribe Vanilleae Blume (1835)

Genus *Epistephium* Kunth (1822)

Epistephium chironii Molinari, Carpio & Mendoza, *nom. nov.*

Replaced synonym: *Sobralia amplexicaulis* Ruiz & Pavón, *Systema Vegetabilium Florae Peruviana et Chilensis* 1: 233 (1798). *Non Epistephium amplexicaule* Poeppig & Endlicher (1845). Figure 1.

Type: PERU. Huánuco. Chinchao. *Ruiz & Pavón s.n* (MA). Figure 2.

Description: erect, saxicolous terrestrials with fasciculate pseudobulbs and ramose stems; leaves alternate, cordate, sessile, amplexicaul, coriaceous; inflorescence racemose, few-flowered, terminal; flowers big, showy, subtended by a bract; sepals purple, lanceolate, glabrous; petals purple, slightly shorter and conspicuously wider than the sepals; lip obcordate, concolorous with the other floral pieces, with a disc furnished with linear scales, lacerate apex; capsule costate, with a persistent ovary crown.

Etymology: named after Guy Chiron, French orchidologist.

Discussion

Epistephium chironii appears to form an alliance with the Colombian *E. lamprophyllum* Schlechter (1924), *E. brevicristatum* R.E.Schultes (1956) and the Brazilian *E. laxiflorum* Barbosa Rodrigues (1877) but differs mainly from the first two species in having non-retrorse scales, and from the latter by the general size and the colour of the flower (bigger and darker in *Sobralia amplexiflora*) and the wider leaves (basing this comparison on the description proposed by Cogniaux, 1896). It is not closely related to *E. amplexicaule* Poeppig & Endlicher.

Since this species is only known from the type, it should be catalogued as 'Data Deficient' in accordance with the criteria proposed by Roque & León (2007) for the endemic Peruvian species.

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1 : Laboratory of Applied Botany (LBA). "Alberto Cazorla Talleri" Faculty of Sciences and Philosophy. Cayetano Heredia University. Lima, Peru.
jessica.carpio.l@upch.pe

2 : "Carlos Vidal Layseca" Faculty of Public Health and Administration. Cayetano Heredia University. Lima, Peru.

3 : "Augusto Weberbauer" Herbarium (MOL) - Department of Biology. Faculty of Sciences. "La Molina" National Agrarian University. Lima, Peru.